LEVASSEUR'S "L'OUVRIER AMÉRICAIN."*

Economists need no assurance that M. Émile Levasseur's recently published treatise on the American Workman gives evidence of painstaking, exhaustive, and scholarly research; of this the author's great repute is in itself ample guarantee. No work in English is at all comparable to this able, statistically descriptive presentation of economic and social conditions in the United States; the work has been left for a foreigner to do, in a foreign tongue, under the direction of two foreign institutions of learning in the interests of a foreign constituency; and, except for the same author's three-volume study of the French population, the work is indeed unique.

Avowedly a study of the American workman in his environment, these two volumes comprehend a full account of the development of American industries, a statement of the material resources of the United States, a forecast of probable economic progress during the next twenty or thirty years, a comprehensive discussion of labor conditions and problems, of social dogmas and of political tendencies. The scope of the author's investigations may be gathered from the following selection of chapter titles: Food of Workmen, Clothing, Lodging, Loan and Building Associations, Savings and Insurance, Real Wages and the Workingman's Budget of Income and Expenditure, The Accumulation of Fortunes and American Democracy, Tariff, Poor Relief, Conciliation and Arbitration, Socialism, Labor Laws, Labor Organizations, Wages of Men, Wages of Women and Children, Sweating, Immigration, Strikes, Crises. These subjects are treated at length, as they concern the social and material welfare of American workmen. In contrast with some more pretentious compilations, supposed to be descriptive of American character and conditions, M. Levasseur's work gives evidence of a more courteous and sympathetic, as it is a more scholarly, consideration

*_L'Ouvrier au Travail. L'Ouvrier chez lui. Les Questions Ouvrières._ **É. Levasseur. Paris, 1898.**

of traits and institutions peculiarly American; and of the author's freedom from national prejudice — one had almost said egotism — which not infrequently characterizes the writings of those foreigners who have attempted to "do" the country in a few weeks' sojourn. The author briefly sets forth the character of the work which he has accomplished, as follows: "In the chapters of this work, I have presented in their several aspects the material and moral conditions which surround the American workman: first, as he appears in the workshop at work; and, secondly, as he appears in the home. I have set forth the relations existing between him and his employers and his hopes of social amelioration; and I have attempted to make of him a character study, which, if it is not complete, has at least been done in all sincerity."

In estimating the development of American industries during this century, more especially during the last fifty years, the economist is face to face with one of the most perplexing statistical problems. The rise of new industries the exploitation of new sources of power, the adoption of new processes of production, the reorganization of industry and the instability of values are variables tending to vitiate comparative statistical estimates of material resources, past and present. Even within any single industry permanently operating during the entire period considered, changes in processes and in organization make comparative estimates misleading. It is with a full appreciation of these difficulties that M. Levasseur has undertaken his account of the industrial development of the United States; and these difficulties he has overcome, where they are not insuperable. In the hands of a less skilful writer, so compendious an undertaking must have assumed the form of a compilation such as German scholars are more accustomed to undertake. It is a peculiar excellence in M. Levasseur's work that he has succeeded, in spite of the immense mass of detailed statistical and descriptive data brought together, in giving to it a form and character which once for all removes it from the category of mechanical compilations. The reader is made to feel that the material has been so handled and synthesized as to compose a real treatise on the American workman at work, at home, as a citizen; and

he is made to feel, further, that the author has indeed "chosen impartially," that he has not been blinded by a "national vanity" which might have led him to "misjudge unfamiliar manners and customs of living and thinking."

The American employer M. Levasseur finds energetic, disposed to fulfil the conditions of contracts entered into with his workmen and exacting a like fulfilment of contracts from them, somewhat self-centred, "profoundly individualistic," and disposed to regard his duties to his employees performed and his responsibility for their welfare ended with the payment of stipulated wages. "Socially, it results from this individualism that the relations existing between employer and employed do not extend beyond the factory door." M. Levasseur urges upon American workmen, employers and employed alike, the necessity of coming to a fuller mutual understanding of each other's needs and aspirations, and of cultivating reciprocal toleration. "It is to be hoped," he observes, "that employers may become less absolute in formulating their demands, and more generally conciliatory in dealing with their employed." And, on the other hand, "that labor organizations may manifest less defiance towards employers, and less hostility to propositions brought forward for the advantage of workmen." M. Levasseur, however, is too well aware of the new conditions in modern industrial organization which have complicated the relations of employer to employed to look for a "solution" of the labor problem, as some American sociologists are disposed to do, in a moral regeneration of the parties engaged in production. These writers, who insist upon such regeneration, insinuate more or less directly that there *has been* a moral degeneration; and the animus of the individual writer usually manifests itself in fastening this degeneration upon one or another — employing or employed — class, according to personal prejudice.

Such an animus is manifest in the observation attributed to an American writer, that laborers are defiant because they are defying a class which has opposed every reform beneficial to them. It is altogether improbable that the reorganization of industry during this century, more particularly during the last quarter of the century,— obviously occasioned by the ex-

ploitation of new natural forces, the differentiation of employments, and the intenser capitalization of industry,— has been accompanied by any marked moral degeneration; and it is no more likely that a "solution" of the labor problem, in so far as that problem is peculiar to our present industrial organization, lies in the propagandic inculcation of "toleration and benevolence," or other virtues. The labor problem is inherent in the complexity of modern industrial conditions,— a complexity which defies simplification in the adjustment of individual interests. The problem is to bring some sort of harmony out of the conflict, real or apparent, of these interests; and no permanent harmony can or ought to depend upon forbearance and toleration. For, while there may be individuals in a community willing to sacrifice self-interests, there certainly are not industrial groups willing, as groups, to make such sacrifices. There is no organized industrial group in society to-day — whether of employers or employed, in industry, agriculture, or trade — which does not proclaim that it is receiving less than its dues, no group which manifests the least disposition to take a farthing less than the utmost it can exact from society. Each group is bound to seek its own interest, and, in a large sense, may be said to be right in doing so; and is bound to exploit less efficient industrial groups. That the "solution" of the labor problem, or composite of labor problems, does not devolve upon altruistic forbearance is sufficiently obvious when it is reflected that that solution is actually accomplished from day to day; that from day to day contracts for the employment of labor and capital are made, and the product of labor and capital is distributed in accordance with certain accepted principles of repartition. The higher co-operative organization of industry complicates the adjustment of individual claims; but some adjustment is accomplished, and the "solution" of the labor problem is effected by those actually engaged in the production of wealth.

Further, it is inconceivable that any of the parties concerned in this production should be materially influenced by would-be social reformers to forego any considerable share in the product of industry now apportioned to them in open com-

petition. Indeed, where competition is free, it is the only just regulator of incomes, of whatever character. Where the organization of industry has assumed a character which inhibits the free action of competition, free exercise of power on the part of the government may become expedient. But such exercise of power is always attended with risk. It carries in itself no guarantee that justice will be done, but only a guarantee that those intrusted with political power will seek to protect those classes and interests with which they are identified. While M. Levasseur does not find in that extension of government functions which naturally accompanies the development of modern industrialism any fatalistic progress towards socialism, he does find in the mass of labor legislation passed in the United States during the last few years what appears to him to be abundant evidence of a class legislation entirely inconsistent with democratic principles of government. And he therefore regards with suspicion any extension of government management into the domain of private industry. A solution of the labor problem dependent upon arbitrary exercise of power by the State endangers individual freedom, and in a democracy tends towards a régime of class domination.

The American workman at work M. Levasseur finds efficient and well paid; at home, well fed, clothed, and lodged; as a citizen, self-reliant and prosperous,—his great material prosperity itself at once occasioning and accounting for the turbulence and discontent which he at times so freely manifests.

It remained for M. Levasseur to discover among those "multiple, complex, and at times discordant characteristics of the American workman, completely naturalized for several generations," traits of character sufficiently universal to warrant the establishment of a *type supérieur*. M. Levasseur contemplates the perpetuation and greater differentiation of this superior type of workman under the conditions of education and social environment which obtain in the United States. "This type," he says, "will persist during the next century, however great the mélange of different and inferior types infused into the American industrial population."

American economists have not infrequently insisted upon the superior efficiency of the American workman. That superiority, however, they have been accustomed to associate with the selective influences of immigration; and they have not been able sufficiently to remove themselves from their immediate environment to detect the existence of national character. Probably no population presents a greater diversity of types than the population of the United States. No population is in its make-up more heterogeneous. And the question naturally arises whether after all the peculiar efficiency of the American workman is more than a direct, perhaps even a temporary, reaction upon environment, whether the superiority really lies in the workman or in his environment. Our industrial groups range through every grade of efficiency and comprise every nationality; and, if M. Levasseur has chosen a workman of superior efficiency as typical of American industry, another writer, equally observing and accurate, less optimistically disposed, might possibly have made out another type equally common and equally "American." Placed in a land of immense natural resources, the American is pre-eminently a wealth-producer, energetic and efficient; but the solidarity of the American people,—does it not rest rather upon community of interests than upon any national community of customs and character?

M. Levasseur presents data which seem to him to prove conclusively that during this century, especially during the last fifty years, American industry in general has had "an ample and magnificent development"; and he enumerates among the chief causes of this development that inventive mechanical ingenuity which, manifesting itself as it does in a multiplicity of inventions, he is pleased to consider a noteworthy national characteristic of Americans.

American producers have long felt the strain consequent on the rapid displacement of old machinery by new and more efficient machinery. This superannuation of fixed plant is so rapid as greatly to enhance the risks attendant upon productive enterprises in the United States, since it renders that element of cost which represents wear and tear of fixed plant incalculable. The greater the investment, the greater the loss

consequent upon the introduction of new mechanical devices. It may be further observed that inventions which promise any considerable economy in the application of labor or capital ordinarily attract new investments of capital seeking to reap the immediate gain arising from the new economy, and that these new investors have every advantage in competing with the old producers, whom they have forced to adopt, at whatever cost, the new methods of economy. The losses consequent upon this displacement of vested capital are immediate and indefinitely great; while the profits arising from the new economy in the application of labor and capital are remote, and distributed over an indefinite period.

A further result which may follow the adoption of a new method of production or a new mechanical device, and one which seems not to have been so commonly noted by economists, is that a permanent reduction in the sum total value of the product of an industry may accompany this destruction of fixed capital. This will always follow when the nature of the product is such that a decline in its value does not stimulate a proportional increase in its consumption. Here, also, the value of the capital employed in the industry is bound to decline. When, however, the new demand maintains the value of the product, the value of the capital employed may or may not decline, according as the new economy consists in more efficient machinery or in the substitution of machine work for hand labor. To simplify implements and reduce the proportion of capital employed to materials used is the effect of those economies resulting from inventions commonly referred to as improvements. These improvements tend to reduce the value of wealth accumulated within a community; but an opposing tendency is found in that increased demand which accompanies a cheapening of the product. Only those inventions which supplant manual labor by machine work tend directly to increase the accumulation of capital.

The motive which has led to the introduction of machinery, in the United States as in other countries, lies obviously in the economy of labor resulting therefrom; and it would seem unnecessary to seek other motives. M. Levasseur, however, would find an additional incentive for American employers in

the general high rate of wages paid American labor. "The higher the wages," writes M. Levasseur, "the greater the incentive for an employer to economize manual labor"; and he illustrates by supposing a machine which will last ten years, costing 50,000 francs and economizing the work of four men, proposed for adoption to an employer paying wages at the rate of 2,000 francs a year. Obviously, the employer will introduce the machine, and save 3,000 francs annually; while an employer paying wages at the rate of 1,000 francs will just as obviously not introduce the machine, since it will occasion him a loss of 1,000 francs a year. The economy of the machine in one case and of the manual labor in the other is sufficiently obvious under the conditions supposed; but the deductions drawn therefrom appear a bit fallacious, when it is borne in mind that the cost of the machine is itself dependent upon wages paid to workmen employed in its construction. In the country where wages were 1,000 francs, the machine would probably have cost but 25,000 francs, so that the same economy must have resulted from its employment in either case. Where wages are high, the cost of the machine is high also. The real incentive to the introduction of machinery lies not in the rate of wages, but in the economy of labor.

In considering the general rate of wages in the United States, M. Levasseur is led to discuss the causes regulating normal wages; and, after insisting upon the futility of assigning any one simple cause as the sole regulator of wages, he proposes the following formula: "*Wages are regulated by divers complex causes, which act severally upon supply and demand,* determining the special rate within each industry and for each individual. From these special rates statistics attempt to deduce the general average rate within a country." These causes he enumerates as follows: (1) productivity; (2) competition; (3) cost of living; (4) capital employed as fixed and circulating (the last corresponding with the wages fund), taking into account rapidity of circulation; (5) activity of production and "amount of consumption soliciting production." "These causes," concludes M. Levasseur, "act wherever the contract of labor is free, in America as well as in Europe. Several of these causes, however, act with greater intensity in

America than in Europe. Productivity, which is on the average higher, the cost of living, which is greater, and the circulation of wealth, which is rapid, tend to raise the average rate of wages; while competition which is due to immigration tends to force wages down."

Economists have pretty generally recognized the fact that the amount of product to be apportioned is determined by the productivity of labor and capital, while competition, on the one hand of labor and on the other of capital, determines the repartition of the product; but that the cost of living in a country is in any sense a co-ordinate cause, regulating wages, many will be disposed to deny. To say that wages are regulated at all by cost of living seems equivalent to the assertion that what a laborer spends regulates what he gets. Further, it is difficult to attach to the last two causes mentioned above any significance which will make them independent causes not already designated under productivity and competition of labor and capital. Indeed, if an enumeration in detail of the complex causes affecting wages, or even of the more important causes so acting in any one country, such as the United States, is here contemplated, the enumeration is quite incomplete,—such an enumeration in detail of causes regulating the rate of wages must mention as chief among these the natural resources of the country, state of the arts and sciences, education and efficiency of laborers and employers; while, as a recitation of general causes regulating wages, the co-ordination appears altogether unsatisfactory.

M. Levasseur hazards an estimate of average wages in the United States for men employed in industry during the years 1890–93. The average, he believes, ranged from $1.75 to $2.00 a day. He insists, however, that the elements are too diverse and incomplete to be calculated; and the data immediately presented would seem to bear witness to the unsatisfactory character of such averages. The paragraph immediately following the one in which the above calculation is made quotes from the Aldrich report average wages for July, 1891, at $2.07. On the opposite page, data for 1895 quote average wages in four cities, as follows: Baltimore, $1.93; Boston, $2.61; New York, $2.34; Philadelphia, $2.34. In a note appended on the

same page average wages are estimated of 83,051 employees — men, women, and children — in Connecticut during 1896 at $1.66, and in several industries respectively at $2.15, $2.04, $2.15, $1.76, $1.92, $1.64,— the highest wages being five or six dollars and the lowest fifty cents a day. The insignificant character of any *average rate* of wages is sufficiently obvious. It appears that we have in the United States, more especially in our cities, a considerable class unable, either from indisposition, intemperance, inefficiency, or accident of environment, to support themselves, and it follows necessarily that we have also individuals living in every state, from absolute poverty to luxurious abundance. This is true not only of the United States, but of all other countries. To say that average wages in the United States are higher than in some other countries can mean only that the class whose wages are at the higher level probably forms a larger proportion of the total population in one community than in the other. But of this we may not be sure, since the average does not indicate how the wages are distributed. An average wage of $2.50 a day may indicate that there are 100,000 laborers at $2.00 and 20,000 at $5.00, or it may mean 100,000 men at $2.00 and 100,000 at $3.00, or 50,000 men at $1.00, 50,000 at $2.00, 50,000 at $3.00, and 50,000 at $4.00. The possibilities are indefinitely great. Furthermore, aside from the insignificant character of any average rate of wages, considerable ambiguity attaches to the general statement that average wages in the United States are higher than average wages in European countries. Does the statement mean that laborers in the United States, working under the same conditions, producing the same product, and employing the same amount of capital, receive a greater share of the product? or that laborers employing the same amount of capital, working under like conditions, are more productive in the United States? or that, other things being equal, owing to the employment of machinery, labor and capital are both more productive, and that consequently the general level of both wages *and profits* is higher?

In his discussion of wages M. Levasseur raises a question which he regards as still in controversy in economic theory,— namely, "whether demand regulates supply, or supply de-

mand"; and he concludes that "a free consumption of goods in a population by absorbing the product of industry stimulates production." Economists have for a long time fully appreciated the ambiguity popularly attaching to the terms "demand" and "supply." Simply stated, the scientific formula that demand must equal supply resolves itself into the self-evident thesis that a population must produce what it consumes. There is here involved no question of economic distribution at all, but only a question of amount of product to be distributed. And this holds true not only of the population as a whole, but of every industrial group within the population. In a sense, just as every individual within a community wants and would consume more than he is willing or able to earn, so every group wants and would consume more than it can or will earn; but this is not economic demand. Just as the labor of every individual has its economic value, great or small, so has the labor of every industrial group within the community a value determined by competition and efficiency. The ultimate demand of any group is measured by the amount of the labor exerted. The number of hours constituting a day's labor within any group is determined by the marginal utility of the product per hour. Each additional hour worked adds an increase of product possessing less and less marginal utility, while the sacrifice involved in each additional hour's work is an increasing one. The number of hours worked per day is fixed at that point where the sacrifice undergone is exactly rewarded by the marginal utility of that hour's product. The choice made by a group of laborers in adopting an eight-hour day is for release from further toil in preference to further reward, which might result from a ninth or tenth hour of work. The efficient economic demand of a group is measured by the labor performed by that group. It is labor exerted, not consumption of goods, which constitutes the demand. This was sufficiently obvious under simpler conditions of production, where individual producers brought their completed product to market and there exchanged it against other goods. That the division of labor now makes it necessary for groups of laborers to combine in the production of a single article may complicate the problem of distribution of the product of labor,

but does not alter the economic laws in accordance with which that distribution takes place. Great economic demand or consumption, therefore, may be an evidence of productive activity, but does not in itself stimulate that activity.

M. Levasseur concludes that the rate of wages within the United States is likely to remain high for a considerable period to come, owing to the great productivity of industry and accumulated wealth within the country. Whether that rate will rise or fall he considers a "delicate question, to which one may only reply, 'perhaps.' If the increase in the demand for labor, in agriculture as well as in industry, should not continue to absorb so easily in the future as it has done up to the present time the increment arising from immigration, wages may decline. Furthermore, there appears to me as great a likelihood of a decline in wages during the next thirty years, owing to the abundant supply of labor, as there is likelihood of a rise, resulting from productivity and from a distribution of the product of industry more favorable to labor." This certainly is a significant expression of opinion by one who may speak with authority. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how such a conclusion is warranted by the data presented in M. Levasseur's pages. That the number of immigrants arriving from year to year should be sufficient to cause a lowering of the general rate of wages in the immediate future seems unlikely. The average annual immigration during the last seventy-five years of this century has amounted to less than 250,000 men, women, and children. Even if we accept M. Levasseur's statement that "the United States, with a population made up entirely from immigration, cannot now renounce its origin and close its frontiers to the further accessions of that character," on the supposition that immigration shall remain during the next thirty years unrestricted by legislation, and that the tide of immigration still flows on at the rate maintained during this century, an increment of 250,000 must prove insignificant in a population which will undoubtedly equal 100,000,000 in the course of the next ten or fifteen years. But, if immigration should really "cast a shadow over the whole laboring class," the nature of our origin will hardly stand in the way of such restrictive legisla-

tion as may appear advantageous. Certainly, the United States is not bound to receive within its borders immigrants of an objectionable character; in fact, it is not unlikely that those natural barriers which have tended to disappear with increasing facilities for cheap and quick transportation, will be succeeded by artificial restrictions of one kind or another. The real reasons for placing restrictions upon immigration, however, are not to-day — nor are they likely to be in the future — economic. The introduction into any community of an abundant supply of cheap labor is economically advantageous to those exploiting the cheap labor, in much the same way as is the introduction of cheap and efficient machinery. There is no reason to fear that a community will get its work performed too cheaply. If, however, the labor coming to us from Europe is as efficient as native American labor, it will earn equally high wages. If less efficient, wages correspondingly lower. If less efficient, such labor cannot compete with native American labor on an equal footing. It will add another group of labor to our industrial population possessing a smaller productive capacity, receiving, consequently, lower wages, and maintaining a lower standard of living. The fear that such a class of laborers might displace and reduce the wages of more efficient laborers is as groundless as the fear that the introduction of improved machinery will work the same injury. So far, therefore, as the high rate of wages in the United States is due to greater efficiency, there is no reason to fear that the introduction of cheaper labor will cause a lowering of that rate.

If wages decline in the United States, it must be due to the fact that the field of employment is so occupied by increasing population as to bring into operation the law of diminishing returns, thus impairing the general productivity of labor and capital; and that any such overcrowding of the field of employment, necessitating a lower standard of living, is likely to occur in a democracy, the history of the French population itself would seem sufficient to disprove. The decline in the rate of natality already manifest among the native American population is a further evidence that in a democracy the movement is naturally from a lower to a higher standard of living.

M. Levasseur predicts that this decline in the rate of wages, should it occur during the next twenty or thirty years, will meet with the most determined opposition on the part of organized labor, and that "in such an event the repartition of the product of industry between the three factors of production will be so modified by that opposition that employers of labor will be forced to lower the rate of profits, and more than in proportion to the decline in the rate of wages." But, if laborers by simple organization and determined opposition can in such event force down the rate of profits, why may they not affect the same results under normal conditions? And, if the rate of profits is not determined in accordance with some economic law of distribution, if it is not dependent upon the conditions of production and the accumulation of capital seeking employment, what is to prevent laborers by organization and determined effort from wiping out profits altogether? Either it is true or it is not that the repartition of the product of industry rests upon economic laws; and, if not, why, especially in a democracy, should not all of that product be turned over to the laborers in the form of wages? The executive capacity which enables employers to-day to command great reward for their services is not likely, in the course of an industrial evolution which every year more and more complicates the direction of labor, to decline in value nor to content itself with lower rewards; while, surely, the return to capital as such, however settled, is not subject to scaling *ad libitum* by simple pressure from organized labor.

In considering some of the economic aspects of modern capitalism M. Levasseur raises a question which has been the subject recently of much popular discussion; *i.e.*, whether the introduction and employment of machinery may not occasion an overproduction of wealth. By a simple train of reasoning the reader is brought to the conclusion that "there can never be in the world too much wealth." This overworked economic epigram has served well enough in its day as a quietus upon those who proposed the theory of overproduction in all its naïve fallacious simplicity; but it is no answer to the more clever and better informed overproductionists of to-day. These writers are far too clever to make the crude assertion

that there can be too much wealth in the world. The gist of their contention lies in the assertion, not that there is too much wealth produced, but that wealth gets into the wrong hands; namely, into the hands of those who do not wish to consume it, while those who have the wish to consume have not the power. "The power to consume and the wish to consume reside in different individuals." The fallacy here is of a more subtle character, and arises from an incomplete conception of economic production. The obvious fact in economic production is that a little labor on a great machine suffices to produce a great amount of wealth. Of this great product a small portion is turned over to laborers in the form of wages. For the rest there is no demand. The owner cannot consume it because it is his capital, and in a form inconsumable so far as he is concerned: the laborers cannot consume it because they already have their wages, and so have no claim on the product remaining. The fallacy lies in overlooking the cost of the machine, and in supposing that the product can generally retain an exchange value independent of that cost, the fact being that such an artificial value can be maintained only in special cases, as where patent rights have been issued or where values are in a state of transition, adjusting themselves to new labor costs. Where values are in a state of equilibrium, there is no excess product over the cost of production. In other words, the value of the product is made up of wages paid directly by the employer to his employees, and wages paid by him indirectly in the purchase of the machine, including under "wages" wages of superintendence. So that the value of the product is normally consumed *during the process of production.* How, then, can this process result in general overproduction?

It is probably in his constructive economic reasoning that M. Levasseur lays himself most open to adverse criticisms. In justice to the author, however, it is to be stated that he does not offer the present work as a treatise in economic science. On the contrary, M. Levasseur frankly everywhere subordinates "theory" to historical, statistical, and narrative description. His subject, however, is one which does not lend itself to purely descriptive treatment; and frequently he is

led into the intricacies of abstract science. Since the welfare of the American workman depends upon the maintenance in the United States of a high rate of wages, M. Levasseur is led to consider the causes regulating that rate. So, in adverting to current social dogmas, labor legislation, State interference, and the like, M. Levasseur is repeatedly led away from the concrete. Nevertheless, the work has, as its author intended it should have, the "character chiefly of an economic history." "An interest attaches to economic phenomena," he observes in his preface, "in and of themselves, independently of possible generalizations. To observe accurately as great a number as possible of these phenomena is an author's first task; his second, to choose among the mass of phenomena with discrimination and with a due sense of his own responsibility." In rendering his account of the American workman strictly impartial, M. Levasseur has chosen to introduce a somewhat unrefined mass of data. Perhaps to American readers it will appear that M. Levasseur's desire to be impartial has somewhat inhibited his selective judgment in the choice of data and authorities. American readers would have welcomed from so renowned a scholar a more critical handling of material. But this very freedom from personal coloring is unquestionably a chief excellence in the work, considered as a manual of information for French readers.

John Cummings.

Harvard University.